administrative approval of Director General of Income Tax before issuing search warrent under section 132 of I.T. Act;

(b) if yes, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether CBDT or any other I.T. Authorities have issued similar directions of taking approval from the senior authorities for taking actions u/s 133A (Survey); and

(d) if Yes, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) CBDT issued instruction on 7.3.2001 to take administrative approval of the Director General of Income Tax by the Director of Income Tax before issuing search warrants so that there is a better supervision and monitoring of search action for curbing tax evasion without causing undue harassment to the tax payers.

(c) and (d) No such instructions have been issued by the CBDT. Surveys under section 133A of the Income Tax Department are generally conducted under supervision of the higher authorities.

Lower revenue collections

1441. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during the last five financial years 1996-97 to 2001-2002, collection of both direct taxes and indirect taxes was lower than what was mentioned by the Finance Minister in his budget estimates;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that even the revised estimates during this period (except 1999-2000) were not met; and

(c) what measures, like periodical monitoring, etc. are proposed to be adopted in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) A number of steps have been taken to increase tax collection which include closer monitoring of collections, plugging leakage of revenue through anti-smuggling and anti-evasion measures; expeditious disposal of tax adjudications and appeals; finalisation of provisional assessments; simplification of tax collection procedures to improve tax compliance; restructuring of the administrative setup and expediting computerisation of operations.

Strike by employees of I.T. Department

1442. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Strike hits filing of I.T. returns" which appeared in the Times of India dated 6th July, 2002;

(b) if so, the reasons for the strike by the employees of the Income Tax Department;

(c) what alternative arrangements have been made to ensure that those visiting the I.T. offices to file their returns do not fact any inconvenience; and

(d) whether the last date of filing returns is being extended beyond 31st July, 2002 and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No legal notice was given by the 'Gazetted Officers' Union and Group 'C' and 'D' employees Unions for strike.

(c) Adequate number of Group 'A' Officers were deputed to receive returns to ensure that persons desirous of filing their returns did not face any inconvenience.

(d) The last date of filing of retuns has been extended to 31st August, 2002 only for employees filing their returns through their employers under Bulk Filing of Returns (Suvidha) Scheme. The last date has not been extended for other persons as the normal work of the Department was not disrupted.